

Smiley Face Tricks for Writing

Mary Ellen Ledbetter Workshop



MAGIC THREE



- Three items in a series, separated by commas that create a poetic rhythm or add support for a point, especially when the items have their own modifiers.



MAGIC THREE

- Example: In those woods, I would spend hours (1)listening to the wind rustle the leaves, (2)climbing the trees and spying on nesting birds, and (3)giving the occasional wild growl to scare away any pink-flowered girls who might be riding their bikes too close to my secret entrance.” (Todd, college freshman)



FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

- Non-literal comparisons add “spice” to writing and can help paint a more vivid picture for the reader. Use similes, metaphors, hyperbole, onomatopoeia, personification, symbolism, irony, alliteration, assonance, etc.



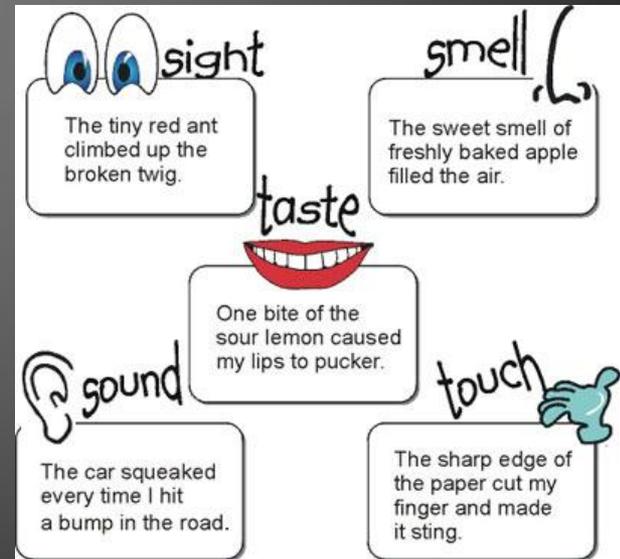
FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

- Example “When we first moved into the house on Orchid Street, I didn’t like it. My room was hot, cramped, and stuffy **as a train in the middle of the Sahara**. And the **looming skeleton-like gray and white frame** of the place scared me.” (Teri, grade 7)



SPECIFIC DETAILS FOR EFFECT

- Add vivid and specific information to your writing to clarify and create word pictures. Use sensory details to help the reader visualize the person, place, thing, or idea that you are describing.



SPECIFIC DETAILS FOR EFFECT

- Example: “Tears rolled down my face and I walked out of the house to catch the bus. I was hoping to find a new bus, but my wishes never came true because here came bus 33, the bus with torn seats, a coughing, hacking engine, and holes so deep in the aisle we could see the road beneath us.



REPETITION FOR EFFECT

- Repeat a symbol, sentence starter, important word, etc. to underline its importance.

Example: “The veranda is your only shelter **away from** the sister in bed asleep, **away from** the brother that plays in the tree house in the field, **away from** your chores that await you.”



HUMOR

- Whenever possible and appropriate, inject a little humor to keep your reader awake. Use hyperbole, an exaggeration.
- Example: “He laughed? I’m nothing. I’m the rear end of nothing, and the devil himself smiled at me.”

HYPERBOLE IS
The BEST
THING EVER!

HYPHENATED MODIFIERS

- When you connect two adjectives or adverbs together with a hyphen, it lends an air of originality and sophistication to your writing.



HYPHENATED MODIFIERS

- Example: “She’s got this blond hair, with dark highlights, parted in the middle, down past her shoulders, and straight as a preacher. She’s got big green eyes that all guys admire and all girls envy, and this **I’m-so-beautiful-and-I-know-it body**, you know, like every other super model.”

Smiley Face Techniques

- Magic 3
- Figurative Language
- Specific Details for Effect
- Repetition for Effect
- Humour
- Hyphenated Modifier

